

IT WAS a wonderfully generous donation and came completely out of the blue. Last week, someone knocked on the window at Springview and said they would like to give £10,000 to our sponsored charity, Medical Detection Dogs.



Our reception manager takes up the story: "I wasn't sure whether to believe it. I went home that night and thought I must have dreamt it! But the visitor – a man called Tony Headland – came back bearing a cheque for the full amount."

It turned out that Tony's friend Rita Foster had been a resident two years ago and had left everything to him when she passed away. He knew Rita had been impressed by Springview's charity fund-raising skills and the work of the specially trained dogs in sniffing out diseases such as cancer, diabetes and now Covid-19. So, he decided to gift the £10,000 in Rita's memory – for which we are enormously grateful.

It's not the first time that Springview has been offered a large single sum for one of its charities. Not long ago, the home was given £5,000 by a benefactor when raising money for the London Air Ambulance. A spokesperson for Medical Detection Dogs said:

"Thank you so much. We're really happy. The money will go a long way towards supporting our work in helping to defeat Covid-19." In the picture above, Tony Headland (left) presents the cheque to Springview manager Tamas Fazekas.

We're having a shout-out this week for the organisers of our hugely popular weekly live-streamed concerts, who achieve an impressive milestone of 30 recitals at our homes in a couple of weeks' time. Now called "Music with Love", there was a nice article about them in last week's *Ham & High* newspaper, which you can read here <https://bit.ly/3qUTYRU>

Jennie Muskett, the founder, whose 93-year-old father Michael is a resident at Spring Grove, tells of the power of music for older people: "I played him a Crumhorn Quartet and he engaged with every note with an extraordinary focus – for people with dementia it's almost magic the way that it can release memories.

"Sometimes, you can say things very simply in music," says Jennie," which reach deep inside people, and touch them in a way that words simply cannot do. Musicians talk about how much that means to them. They are playing from the heart and you feel it at the deepest level."

This week's concert featured pianist Andrew West playing Bach's Goldberg Variations, with some delightful poetry read by the actor Simon Callow, an old friend of Spring Grove and a regular chairman of judges at the home's music festival. It is being repeated next Wednesday March 24 at 2.30pm and you can join in, too, by following this link <https://www.artistsandresidents.org/>

You are encouraged to offer your own comments via the link, and to make a donation too – as we have done from Springdene. One relative relished joining in so much that she dressed up for the concert specially and wrote about how much it enhanced her wellbeing!

It may be a while yet before we can bring live musicians back into the homes, but we are pleased to report that the first two weeks of visiting by relatives have gone very well. There has been great joy at being reunited indoors with your loved ones after such a long time – encapsulated by this comment from one relative at Spring Grove:

"I saw my father yesterday it was very emotional, but marvellous. As soon as I walked into the building, I was immediately aware that the lovely, bubbling atmosphere of conversation and activity that used to pervade the place, has returned. Congratulations. It's a heart-warming relief and I can only imagine the work and effort that has gone into making that happen."

Thanks for your cooperation, too, and we appreciate your support in negotiating the sometimes-difficult rules. We'd just like to remind you that only one visitor is allowed

and that must consistently be the same person. We repeat, as a reminder, the Springdene Responsible Visitor code at the end of this newsletter.

We are looking at the option of resuming outside visits, which are now permitted under the government's guidelines. These, unfortunately, would be under social distancing rules – ie, two metres apart and preclude touching. However, a maximum of two visitors would be allowed. If you are interested in us laying on this type of visit, please contact us at mwilliams@springdene.co.uk.

Meanwhile, folk in the homes have been enjoying a season of celebrations over the past few days. At Spring Lane, manager Lori marked International Women's Day by presenting residents (below) with tulips and chocolates. Everyone enjoyed a tipples of prosecco, too (and why not!) Some ladies at Spring Lane have had the pleasure of getting a hairdo, too – a treat denied to the rest of us until next month.



Mothers' Day last Sunday saw folk putting their best foot forward for a tea dance in all three homes. Eager ladies at Springview were queuing up to take the floor with our dapper activities honcho Steve. Meanwhile on St Patrick's Day on Wednesday the Shamrock was in the ascendant as the lounges were transformed for a "pub afternoon", with a large helping of Irish *craic*. Guinness and G&Ts could be "bought" from the "bar" using tokens, and there were some great singsongs with plenty of toasts to St Pat!

A Celtic theme, too, hallmarked the second round of our Great Springdene Bake Off, where the challenge was to produce a traditional Irish barmbrack – a tea loaf enriched with sultanas and raisins. The results, we're delighted to say, were yummy and would, we believe, have earned plaudits from Prue Leith and Paul Hollywood.

Overall winner was Spring Grove, which produced a loaf based on a Mother's Day theme. Spring Lane and Springview were runners up respectively, with presentations themed around St Patrick's Day. But it was a close-run contest in which everyone excelled.

Of the winning entry, our chief taster Eirlys Roff remarked: "A lovely textured crust and even fruit distribution. It was great to come across a cherry here and there, as well as some apricot. The texture was delightful – perfect, spread with a thick layer of butter! The hint of whiskey came through nicely at the end of every mouthful." Well done to our winning bakers, some of whom are seen below.



While everyone is feeling competitive, don't forget the Big Quiz, in which residents and families compete with one another. The questions are on an Irish theme this week. Eirlys has sent them out already and answers should be in by next Monday, March 22. Get your thinking caps on!

Lastly, we're pleased to offer congratulations to our Residents of the Week, who are pampered with flowers, chocolates and other treats. Ghodsi Sarbaz at Spring Grove hails from Iran and is a former secretary who loves history and watching travel programmes. Peggy Kiddy at Springview was a factory worker all her life, and loves chicken, which she is having for her special meal. Pat Dean at Spring Lane is a former PE teacher from Northumberland. Always with a smile on her face. Pat is a big fan of trifle, which she has chosen for her treat. Well done to all!

And well done, too, to Irene McBride, who we wrote about enjoying her 106th birthday the other day – still relishing life as Spurs' oldest season ticket holder. Now Irene has been honoured with a picture story in the football club's fans' magazine and invited to the ground as soon as the rules allow. It's a goal we're sure you're aiming for, Irene!

Springdene Responsible Visitor Code

While we recognise the importance of family visits for the wellbeing of residents, our priority must remain the safety of residents, staff and visitors to our homes.

We remain mindful of concerns that there may be a further outbreak of COVID-19 as lockdown restrictions ease and want to do all we can to minimise this risk in our homes whilst allowing indoor visiting to occur.

To this end, we have explored options for easing restrictions to enable relatives or close friends to visit with their loved ones in ways that adhere to the new Government guidance.

For this purpose, we have revised our Responsible Visitor Code' that visitors are to follow, to minimise risk:

- Each resident is to have **one, nominated, constant visitor** who will be the only person allowed to visit, the **only** exception is when end of life care is being provided.
 - The nominated, constant visitor cannot be changed once agreed with the home, and they must agree with having a Lateral Flow Device (LFD) test before entry, that if the result is positive, then they and their household must self-isolate for 10 days
 - The nominated, constant visitor will need to pre-book in advance for a specific day and time. This is to limit the volume of people through the home at any one time.
 - Additionally, due to the initial surge in visits, we encourage anyone wishing to visit, where possible, to book a weekday slot.
 - You will need to allow up to 45 minutes for each visit, so that a LFD test can be conducted with the face-to-face visit limited to only 30 minutes.
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- Entry to the home is restricted to those with a negative LFD result. Where a positive result is confirmed, you will be required to arrange a PCR test, and immediately self-isolate at home until the result of the PCR has confirmed your COVID-19 status.
- Children, under the age of 18, will not be allowed at this time.
- If you are showing any symptoms which could indicate COVID-19, please do not travel to the care home, as we will refuse entry.
- On arrival you will need to be wearing a facemask, and apply hand sanitiser, then shown to the waiting area, where you will answer some health screening questions, your temperature is taken, and you will be required to swab both your throat and nose for the LFD test.
- The LFD test can take up to 15 minutes for a result. Following a negative LFD result, you will then be asked to change your mask, sanitise your hands, apply gloves and apron and make your way to the visiting room.
- Visitors will be required to wear a face covering for the duration of their visit; even if you have brought your own, we ask that you use the ones provided.
- Where a member of staff is provided to escort visitors, visitors must follow them to the designated visiting area and will be required to remain there for the duration of the visit.
- We request that social distancing be observed, but whilst wearing PPE you will be able to hold hands, but please refrain from hugging or kissing.
- Visitors will not be able to use facilities such as toilets.
- Wherever possible, visitors should try to walk or travel by car to the home, and avoid public transport when visiting the home.
- Any gifts that a visitor has brought for the resident they are visiting will be sanitised in line with IPC guidance.

In the event of any suspected or actual outbreak of COVID-19 within a home, visitor restrictions will need to be immediately implemented. Unfortunately, this will include the exclusion of any non-essential visitors.

We understand that many of these measures will be difficult for families who have not seen their loved one for some time, but we believe they are crucial in guaranteeing the safety of all our residents.

As the COVID-19 pandemic develops and government advice evolves, we will continue to review our visiting policy, and will keep you updated about what is happening in our care homes.
